

unmodified expressions should be introduced much seldomer in the course of their sentences, than the half-scriptural phrases are recurring in the diction under consideration, they would remind us of the Bible in a more advantageous manner, than a dialect which has lost the dignity of a sacred language without acquiring the grace of a classical one. I am sensible in how many points the illustration would be defective, but it would partly answer my purpose to observe, that if it were wished to promote the study of some vene-rated human author of a former age, suppose Hooker, the way would not be to attempt incorporating a great number of his turns of expression into the essential structure of our own diction, which would generally have a most uncouth effect, but to make respectful references, and often to insert in our composition sentences, and parts of sentences, distinctly *as his*, while our own cast of diction was conformed to the general modern standard.

Let the oracles of inspiration be cited continually, both as authority and illustration, in a manner that shall make the mind instantly refer each expression that is introduced to the venerable book whence it is taken ; but let *our* part of religious language be simply ours, and let those oracles retain their characteristic form of expression unimitated, unparodied, to the end of time.\*

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\* In the above remarks, I have not made any distinction between the sacred books in their own language, and as translated. It might not, however, be improper to notice, that though there is a great peculiarity of language in the original, yet a certain proportion of the phraseology, as it stands in the translated scriptures, does not properly belong to the structure of the original composition, but is to be ascribed to the complexion of the language at the time when the translation was made. A translation, therefore, made now, and conformed to the present state of the language, in the same degree in which the earlier translation was conformed to the state of the language at that time, would make an alteration in some parts of that phraseology which the theological dialect has attempted to incorporate and imitate. If therefore it *were* the duty of divines to take the biblical mode of expression for their model, it would still be quite a work of supererogation to take this model in a wider degree of difference from the ordinary language suited to serious thoughts than as it would appear in such a later version. This would be a homage, not to the real diction of the sacred scriptures, but to the earlier cast of our own language. At the same time it must be admitted, both that the change of expression which a later version might, on merely philological principles, be justified by the progress and present standard of our language for making, would not be great: and that every sentiment of prudence and devotional taste forbids